New Schemes of Postal Department

915. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what are the new schemes proposed to be introduced by the Postal Department where the tariff would be below the cost of service, as reported in the Indian Express dated the 28th August, 2002;

(b) what are the new incentives in saving bank schemes; and

(c) whether senior citizens are likely to be benefited by the new services especially under the fixed deposit monthly income schemes, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) The Indian Express report dated 28th August. 2002 refers to the Minister of State (Communications & Information Technology) statement that Indian Postal Services are offering 18 out of 24 services where the tariff is below the cost of the service.These are existing services which are being run as a part of social obligation.The report does not refer to new schemes to be introduced by the Department of Posts where the tariff would be below the cost of service.

(b) Now new incentives have been introduced in respect of various Post Office Savings Bank schemes during the current financial year *i.e.* 2002-03.

(c) No new benefits have been given to senior citizens either in the new services or in the existing Post Office Savings Bank schemes during the current financial year *i.e.* 2002-03.

Merger of BSNL and MTNL

916. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering merger of BSNL and MTNL;